



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Groundwater Awareness Week: March 9-15, 2014**

***Time to schedule your annual water well checkup!***

**Eau Claire, WI -March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014-** The Eau Claire City-County Health Department (ECCCHD) is raising awareness about how to make sure your well water is safe. Just as you check your furnace or smoke detector batteries seasonally, spring is a good season to have an annual water well checkup before the peak water use season begins, according to the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) and the health department.

**Why is it a good idea to have my water well tested and checked annually?**

An annual checkup by a local well driller or plumber is the best way to ensure the safety and quality of your water, says Lieske Giese, Health Department Director.

Also, preventative maintenance usually is less costly than emergency maintenance. Good well maintenance — like good car maintenance — can prolong the life of your well and related equipment. Giese further recommends you test your water annually in addition to whenever there is a change in taste, odor, appearance, or when the system is serviced. The health department has a public health laboratory that can perform the recommended annual bacteria and nitrate testing for only \$33.

**Schedule your annual water well checkup.**

With well ownership comes the responsibility of keeping the water well in good working order. A check of your well by a qualified water well contractor may include:

- A flow test to determine system output, along with a check of the water level before and during pumping (if possible), pump motor performance (check amp load, grounding, and line voltage), pressure tank and pressure switch contact, and general water quality (odor, cloudiness, etc.).
- A well equipment inspection to assure it's sanitary and meets local code.

- A test of your water for coliform bacteria and nitrates. Depending on your location, the health department may recommend other tests such as metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), water hardness, sulfides, and other water constituents that cause problems with plumbing, staining, water appearance, and odor.

Giese also recommends that well owners:

- Keep hazardous chemicals, such as paint, fertilizer, pesticides, and motor oil far away from your well, and maintain a "clean" zone of at least 50 feet between your well and any kennels and livestock operations.
- Maintain proper separation between your well and buildings, waste systems, and chemical storage areas.
- Periodically check the well cover or well cap on top of the casing (well) to ensure it is in good repair and securely attached. Its seal should keep out insects and rodents.
- Keep your well records in a safe place. These include the construction report, and annual water well system maintenance and water testing results.

**For more information, visit [www.echealthdepartment.org](http://www.echealthdepartment.org) or come to the health department and pick up a sample bottle at 720 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue in downtown Eau Claire.**

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